



**U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement**

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# News Release

## **TWO NIGERIAN HEROIN SMUGGLERS SENTENCED TO 57 YEARS**

*Drug smugglers recruited juveniles to swallow hundreds of heroin pellets*

HOUSTON—U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) Houston Special Agent-in-Charge, Joseph R. Webber announced that Jan. 31 U.S. District Judge Nancy Atlas sentenced two Nigerians, Taiye Kassim (aka Sediq Adegun), 30, and Olabode Timothy Aransiola (aka Bolaji), 29, to 27 and 30 years in prison, respectively, for smuggling heroin from Nigeria into the United States through human body carriers.

“This sentence illustrates the serious consequences for those who violate our borders to bring in contraband. ICE stands ever vigilant in the protection of our nation and our people,” said ICE Special Agent-in-Charge, Joseph R. Webber.

The two Nigerians smuggled over 70 kilograms of heroin into the United States since March 2000. A jury convicted both Kassim and Aransiola June 25 of conspiracy to import and transport heroin with the intent to distribute.

Kassim and Aransiola acted as managers for the organization and recruited juveniles from Nigeria and Lagos to be internal body carriers. The juveniles would then travel from Lagos or Nigeria to Houston, Texas or other international airports throughout the country with hundreds of swallowed heroin pellets inside their stomachs.

Kassim and Aransiola were responsible for recruiting the juveniles and making sure that they were met at international airports such as Bush Intercontinental Airport before continuing on to Chicago, Illinois where the criminal organization had its hub.

Members of this criminal organization in Nigeria would purchase airline tickets for the body carriers and send them to the United States. The carriers landed in different international airports and were then met by other members of the organization to escort them to flights to other cities such as Houston, Texas, and Chicago, Ill. The hub for the heroin smuggling organization was out of Chicago.

The carriers would be paid for the weight of heroin pellets they could swallow and successfully smuggle into the country.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*